

Message Text

SECRET

PAGE 01 LIBREV 00171 281318Z

53

ACTION AF-06

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 IO-11 SAM-01 CIAE-00 DODE-00

PM-04 H-02 INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01

SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06 ACDA-05 ARA-06 SAJ-01 OMB-01

(ISO) W

----- 066086

R 270814Z JAN 76

FM AMEMBASSY LIBREVILLE

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 7335

INFO AMEMBASSY ABIDJAN

AMEMBASSY ADDIS ABABA

AMEMBASSY BANGUI

AMEMBASSY DAKAR

AMEMBASSY KINSHASA

AMEMBASSY LAGOS

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY LUSAKA

AMEMBASSY PARIS

AMEMBASSY YAOUNDE

USUN NY 2088

S E C R E T LIBREVILLE 0171

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, AO, GB

SUBJ: GABONESE VIEWS ON ANGOLA

1. SUMMARY. GOG FONMIN OKUMBA PESSIMISTIC ABOUT ANGOLAN SITUATION, WHERE HE SEES MPLA WINNING DOMINANT POSITION BY FORCE OF ARMS, BUT HAS NO CURRENT SUGGESTIONS FOR NEW COUNTERMOVES OTHER THAN INCREASED MILITARY SUPPORT FOR FNLA/UNITA. END SUMMARY.

2. IN COURSE MY CALL JANUARY 27, GOG FONMIN OKUMBA EXPRESSED CONSIDERABLE PESSIMISM ABOUT ANGOLAN SITUATIONMIN WAKE RECE NT DEVELOPMENTS THERE. UNFORTUNATELY, HE

SECRET

SECRET

PAGE 02 LIBREV 00171 281318Z

SAID, FUTURE OF ANGOLA IS BEING DETERMINED ON THE

BATTLE FIELD, WHERE GREATER WEIGHT OF SOVIET ARMS AND CUBAN TROOPS APPEARS TO BE CARRYING THE DAY FOR MPLA. OKUMBA WAS SHARPLY CRITICAL OF SOVIET AND CUBAN ROLE, ARGUING THAT BOTH COUNTRIES ARE ACTING FOR THEIR OWN PURPOSES AND WITH VERY LITTLE REGARD FOR INTERESTS OF CUBAN PEOPLE. NEVERTHELESS, SOVIETS HAD CHOSEN THEIR MOMENT WELL FOR POWER PLAY OF THIS KIND, AND THEY APPEAR TO BE WINNING THEIR GAMBLE.

3. OKUMBA HAD NOTHING TO SUGGEST FOR PRESENT BY WAY OF DIPLOMATIC COUNTERMOVES, AND THOUGHT ONLY EFFECTIVE ACTION FOR IMMEDIATE FUTURE WOULD HAVE TO BE IN MILITARY FIELD. USG ROLE, IN HIS VIEW, REMAINS KEY TO PREVENTING ALL-OUT MPLA VICTORY, AS ONLY US CAN PROVIDE SUFFICIENT COUNTERWEIGHT TO SOVIET-CUBAN PRESENCE. HE RECOGNIZED, HOWEVER, LIMITATIONS IMPOSED ON US ROLE BY CONGRESSIONAL CONCERNS, BUT ADDED HOPE THAT WAY COULD BE FOUND TO OVERCOME THESE CONSTRAINTS LEST SOVIETS EMERGE TRIUMPHANT.

4. VICTORY FOR SOVIET-BACKED MPLA, OKUMBA SAID, WOULD HAVE SERIOUS CONSEQUENCES NOT ONLY IN NEIGHBORING STATES BUT THROUGHOUT AFRICA. "LITTLE PEOPLE" WOULD INTERPRET IT IN SIMPLISTIC TERMS AS EVIDENCE THAT USSR IS STRONGER THAN US. WITHIN CENTRAL AFRICA, GABON AND OTHERS WOULD BE THREATENED BY MASSIVE SOVIET PRESENCE ON THEIR BORDERS. GREATEST DANGER WOULD BE TO ZAIRE, WHERE USG SUPPORT WOULD BE CRUCIAL TO MOBUTU'S SURVIVAL. GOG RECOGNIZES THAT MOBUTU IS OFTEN A DIFFICULT AND UNPREDICTABLE FRIEND, OKUMBA CONCEDED, BUT NONETHELESS BELIEVES THAT HIS PRESENCE IS ESSENTIAL TO STABILITY IN ZAIRE AND CENTRAL AFRICA AND THUS HOPES THAT USG WILL CONTINUE TO GIVE HIM BACKING HE REQUIRES.

5. OKUMBA CONCLUDED ON SLIGHTLY MORE UPBEAT NOTE BY SUGGESTING THAT TWO-PARTY COALITION OF MPLA AND UNITA MIGHT STILL EMERGE AS MPLA FINDS INCREASING DIFFICULTY IN CONTROLLING LARGE OVIMBUNDU AREA LOYAL TO SAVIMBI. HE FELT THAT CONTINUED SOUTH AFRICAN SUPPORT FOR UNITA WOULD HELP FORCE MPLA TO ACCEPT COMPROMISE, AND EXPRESSED GOG HOPE THAT SOUTH AFRICANS WILL NOT COMPLETELY WITHDRAW

SECRET

SECRET

PAGE 03 LIBREV 00171 281318Z

THEIR TROOPS FROM ANGOLA. STEIGMAN

SECRET

NNN

Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: POLITICAL SITUATION, GOVERNMENT REACTIONS, MILITARY EXERCISES
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 27 JAN 1976
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: CunninFX
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1976LIBREV00171
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Film Number: D760032-0712
From: LIBREVILLE
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1976/newtext/t19760119/aaaaaftp.tel
Line Count: 108
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Office: ACTION AF
Original Classification: SECRET
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 2
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: SECRET
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: n/a
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: CunninFX
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 22 APR 2004
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <22 APR 2004 by BoyleJA>; APPROVED <12 AUG 2004 by CunninFX>
Review Markings:

Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
04 MAY 2006

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: GABONESE VIEWS ON ANGOLA
TAGS: PFOR, AO, GB, FNLA, MPLA, UNITA
To: STATE
Type: TE
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 04 MAY 2006